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# SPRAY COURIER.

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## BY MISADVENTURE

FRANK BARRETT

### CHAPTER I.

My name is Keene—Anthony Keene. I am a lawyer; sixty-four years is my age. You may see what kind of man I am by my portrait; not over pleasant with anyone.

George Flexmore and I were friends. He was my first client when I set up in Coneyford, a small town just large enough at that time, as I believed, to keep a lawyer of its own; there are a couple of us now, and we have as much to do as we need. Flexmore had just then come into a fortune and he did not know what to do with it. I prevented him from losing it, as he certainly would have done without proper direction, for he was an easy-going man, of a credulous disposition, such as your needy adventurer and shifty speculator love to take in hand. For every man that has money there are ninety-nine who are anxious to spend it for him.

"If any one asks you for money, Flexmore," said I, "don't refuse him; send him to me." And he did so, with this result—he never lost a penny by these good-natured friends. He had a great respect for me—more than I deserved doubtless. He seemed to think that whatever I did must be right, and I believe it was the sheer force of example that kept him out of matrimony so long; because I did not care to take a wife, he thought it best to keep single. But the conditions were different. I am not an easy-going man, and marriage would have been purgatory for me or my wife, and the result must have been equally bad for both of us in either case. But Flexmore had nothing to do from morning to night that might not very well be set aside to attend to the wants of somebody else. He saw that he ought to have some other object in life than to eat and sleep and kill time—that his life was incomplete in fact. But he still made pretense of being content with a bachelor's existence.

One day I caught him singing his old song, "When a man's single he lives at his ease," but in such a lugubrious strain that it would have made me laugh if it had not irritated me.

"That's a humbug, Flexmore," said I, "and you know it. A man's happiness consists in making other people happy—unless he's a lawyer. You're not a lawyer, and you ought to be making somebody happy. You'd be more at your ease if you had somebody else to think about, and somebody else to think about you."

"Do you mean that I ought to marry, Tony?" he said, blushing like a girl.

"That is exactly what I do mean, George. There's little Miss Vaughan, who has been waiting to be asked these three years; there are dozens of girls to be chosen from."

"Do you think she would have me?" he interrupted eagerly.

"Well, the best way of deciding that point is to go and ask her this afternoon," said I.

The result of this advice was that Flexmore married Miss Vaughan just six weeks after.

She was much younger than he, as a wife should be. A happier couple I never saw. He lived to please her, and she to please him—that was the chief object of their lives.

A year after their marriage they had a child, and a nice fuss they made about it. She grew up a pleasant little thing, shy and timid, with a clinging affection for her parents and things. I never saw anything like the passionate attachment that existed between her and her sweet-tempered mother. Poor Mrs. Flexmore had never been a robust person, and—well, to cut short a story that is too painful to dwell upon, she died when little Laure was eleven years old.

Flexmore was then sixty-two, but he was not too old to suffer. The loss unmanned him completely. He took on like a woman; and he would have been less a man if he had not, perhaps.

"My poor old friend," said I, "it would have been better to let you live on an old bachelor."

"No, no," he replied. "After such happiness an eternity of suffering would find me still a gainer."

"You have a child—your little Laure," said I; and then, to turn his thoughts from the past, I talked about the future, and what he should do for the child's welfare. Indeed the child's grief gave me almost as much concern as the father's. It was not a passionate outburst, that spends itself like a summer shower and gives place to peace and smiles, but a continued fruitless yearning for that loved one to come back who was gone forever.

"You must have a woman here to comfort her," I said to Flexmore.

He agreed to this, and sent for his deceased brother's widow, who had married again and been a second time left a widow, as being his nearest female relative, and she came readily enough—a woman of fifty, hard as nails, and stringy as an old crow. She looked upon little Laure's distress as unnatural in a child, and her morbid condition as the result of defective education; and she set about correcting all this by setting the little thing to read some instructive and moral books which no conceivable creature could find interest or pleasure in.

After she had been there three days Dr. Awdrey had to be sent for. Laure was feverish and couldn't "hold herself up properly." Dr. Awdrey directed her to be put to bed at once, gave directions respecting treatment, and sent physic to be administered every two hours.

Mrs. Yeames had studied medicine from a shilling handbook that she carried with her as if it were an amulet; she diluted the physic and administered doses when she thought fit. Little Laure was very much worse when the doctor called the next day; and it was not long before he discovered the reason. He came down into the library where I was sitting with Flexmore.

"Your child is in a very dangerous condition," he said firmly.

"Heaven have mercy upon me!" exclaimed my old friend, clasping his hands. "What's to be done?"

"She must have a proper nurse, to begin with," said Dr. Awdrey. "I can get you one whom I can rely on implicitly, and who can do more than all my physic for the poor child. She is in the hospital for little children at London, and I believe she would come at once if I asked her."

"Then for mercy's sake, telegraph for her at once."

When the doctor was gone Flexmore in some embarrassment turned to me.

"It will never work, Tony," said he despondently. "The nurse will never be able to put up with Mrs. Yeames."

"Yes," she's turned the whole place topside tiddy in putting things in order, and left not a bit of comfort anywhere."

"Yes, yes; all the things that my darling loved she has packed away—the little trifles with which she made these rooms so bright and pleasant. I can't bear to see the place altered; and those trifles, Tony, I miss them—I miss them."

"We'll have 'em all back again in twenty-four hours."

"I asked her to come and live here. How can I get rid of her?"

"Don't bother about that, George. You leave her to me. Give me full authority to act in your behalf, and stick to my directions."

He gave me his word most impressively that he would. I went into the sitting room and sent at once for Mrs. Yeames. Then we had it out. She was a tough one to deal with, but not nearly so tough as I am. I tried to be polite, but I fear I insulted her. She certainly said "I did, and went into the library to know if her brother-in-law would tolerate such a want of respect on the part of a mere attorney; and the question being put directly to Flexmore whether she or I were to leave that house at once and forever, he replied that he felt convinced, taking all things into consideration, that he could better afford to lose her than me."

After that there was nothing for the indignant widow to do but to pack up and pack off—which she did, happily, before her fury gave place to more prudent considerations.

### CHAPTER II.

I expected to see a comely, motherly, middle-aged woman, and was taken aback by surprise when Nurse Gertrude presented herself in the person of a slight young woman of twenty-two or thereabouts.

Of course I am no judge of female beauty, but I don't think Nurse Gertrude at that time could be considered handsome, or even very pretty. If I have any predilection, it is for large women with round, full figures; and I think I rather like a saucy eye and a nice little turned-up nose.

Now Nurse Gertrude, though by no means short, was, as I have said, slight and thin. She had a very delicate, fair complexion and pretty, dark hair, to be sure; but her nose was long, and her eyes were by no means saucy, but calm and deep and thoughtful. Her expression was cheerful, and she had a pretty trick of blushing, but in repose her face was full of intelligence and solicitude. One could not look at her without being impressed with the belief that she was essentially a pure and honest girl, with a very earnest purpose, an amiable disposition, and a clear-seeing, right-feeling mind. Her eyes were so true and frank and loyal, that one was attracted towards her as to a friend whose fidelity and love could never be doubted.

One thing struck me, and this was that in some peculiarity—I know not what—she bore a resemblance to Mrs. Flexmore as I had known her in her younger days. And this seemed also to have struck Flexmore, for more than once I saw him, forgetful of the table, looking at her with the tenderest interest on his poor old woe-begone face.

"Oh, I see how this will end," said I to myself. "He'll marry that girl if she'll have him."

Mrs. Yeames, like an old buzzard that has missed its prey, hovered about the neighborhood, watching the quarry with the jealous intention of preventing any other creature of her own species clawing up what she had failed to secure. She took a cottage at the other end of the town and joined a clique of ladies famous for their ability in picking to pieces the reputation of a fellow-Christian.

Meanwhile Nurse Gertrude fulfilled her duties with the calm self-possession of one conscientiously doing what she feels to be right. What she had come there to do, she did—and as if by magic. With Dr. Awdrey's help she got the fever under in a week, and after that she brought a smile back to the poor child's wasted face, which was of still greater importance; for when one can smile, one can eat and enjoy food. She gave little Laure something to love, and nourished her heart with kindness. That was what

she needed; that was what she got. She had been craving for love since her mother was taken away, and must have died without it, as surely as a plant must die without sunlight.

But how was she to be weaned of this love-food in order that Nurse Gertrude might in time return to her hospital? Every day her appetite grew by what it fed on. All the clinging affection she had borne to her mother she now exhibited towards Nurse Gertrude. The child had recognized the likeness that had struck me; mother and nurse alike, in some respects, were still of the same type of woman—and an excellent type, too. After a time it became obvious that Laure was not to be weaned and that to take away Nurse Gertrude would in fact be taking away the child's life. Little Laure would not have endured in losing her mother. Thereupon there were consultations between Flexmore, Dr. Awdrey and me.

"It is obvious that Nurse Gertrude is very strongly attached to your child," said Dr. Awdrey.

"She is not unhappy here; she looks better than when she came," said Flexmore.

"Oh, undoubtedly she is better," Dr. Awdrey agreed. "The confinement of the hospital and the air of London were telling upon her—in fact, I must admit that in recommending her I was influenced by the consideration that the change would be to her advantage as well as your daughter's."

"If she would only consent to stay here as a companion to dear Laure—in any capacity, on any terms," said Flexmore. "Do you think she would?"

"Go and ask her," said I.

She was asked; but Dr. Awdrey was the negotiator, for Flexmore had not the courage of a mouse. And Nurse Gertrude acquiesced—setting aside all other considerations for the sake of the child whose love had won her heart. So Dr. Awdrey put it; for my own part I could not see what sacrifice she had made in exchanging a close hospital ward for a pleasant and airy house, and an ill-paid salary for a very remunerative position where she was free to do just as she liked. No; I looked upon it that the young lady, together with other very good qualities, had a very clear perception of her duty to herself, and that she foresaw as plainly as I did that sooner or later she would become Mrs. Flexmore.

However, to stick to the facts of the case; that day Nurse Gertrude came down to dinner without the becoming little cap which had previously distinguished her as an official nurse; and if we had come to think her pretty in her cap, we were bound to admit that she looked still nicer without it—her pretty hair drawn neatly up and coiled plainly on her head.

We have a flower show in our town once a year. The first day is the best, of course, and the prices excluding the poorer kind of people, only the upper sort are there. There was a rumor that titled visitors were staying with the Caselys, and that probably they would visit the show in the afternoon; wherefore you may be sure that Mrs. Yeames and her "superlax" set were all there in full feather.

About three o'clock I saw Miss Dalrymple come in with Laure; she never missed any occasion of giving pleasure to the child, or of taking it herself for that matter. She was plainly dressed; but, to my mind, there was no more elegant young lady there. Mrs. Yeames with three of her finest friends stopped them, and with the most distant patronizing inclination of their heads to Miss Dalrymple, bent down to kiss Laure, and ask after her poor, dear papa. Then Mrs. Yeames, taking the child's hand, led her to a bank of cut flowers, asking her whether she could spell the labels attached.

In the midst of this instructive display of her own acquisitions, there was a flutter amongst the visitors, and word was whispered that Mrs. Casely had arrived and had brought Lord Dunover with her. And there, sure enough, was Mrs. Casely with a tall, white-haired, aristocratic old gentleman, coming right down upon the little party. There was not time to get away from little Laure and that horrid nurse Gertrude, when Mrs. Casely met them and introduced his lordship. Dunover bowed stiffly, but suddenly catching sight of Miss Dalrymple, his face became illumined with a smile of heart-felt pleasure, and exclaiming, "What, Gertrude, my dear, you here!" he took her by both hands and kissed her pretty lips. Then turning to Mrs. Casely, he said:

"Mrs. Casely, let me introduce you to my niece—a little democrat who almost shakes my class prejudice, for she prefers independence as a hospital nurse to sharing the fallen fortunes of her family."

Then it was known that Miss Dalrymple was actually the niece of an earl. And she and Laure spent a week at Casely Manor, where Mrs. Yeames and her "superlax" set had never been allowed to stay longer than half an hour.

(To be continued.)

**First Aid.**  
A Washington doctor was recently called to his telephone by a colored woman formerly in the service of his wife. In great agitation the darky advised the physician that her youngest child was in a bad way.

"What seems to be the trouble?" asked the doctor.

"Doc, she done swallowed a whole bottle of ink."

"I'll be over there in a short while to see her," said the medico. "In the meantime, have you done anything for her?"

"I done give her three pieces o' blotting paper, doc," said the negro doubtfully.—Harper's Weekly.

No Arctic explorers have ever had colds until they returned to civilization. Then, one and all, they are prostrated by severe influenza.

## OREGON STATE ITEMS OF INTEREST

### LARGE CLIP EXPECTED.

**Eastern Oregon Wool Industry Looks Encouraging.**

Pendleton—The fixing of the wool sales dates for Eastern Oregon is the first step in what promises to be one of the best years for sheep and wool in the history of the state. Owing to the mild winter all over Eastern Oregon the lamb crop promises to be heavy and the wool clip will average higher than ever before. It is estimated that the Eastern Oregon herds will average nine pounds or more this year, owing to the constant improvement of the grade of sheep. Shearing is now being discussed and prices will be fixed soon. It is thought the price for shearing will be about 7½ cents per head, and there is a large preference shown for hand shearing, owing to the fact that the machines injure the roots of the wool by cutting too close to the skin of the sheep. The skin of the machine-shorn sheep being clipped extremely close, sunbursing badly and this retards the growth of the wool for another year.

Wool and sheep buyers are already on the ground, and there promises to be spirited bidding for wool and mutton sheep all over this section. Ewes which will bear a lamb this spring and having a heavy fleece of wool upon them are now worth \$6 per head in Eastern Oregon.

### FARMERS HOLD THEIR WHEAT

**Grocers of Baker County Expect to Get High Prices.**

Baker City—One of the strongest combines among the farmers around Baker City is now in existence and it is practically impossible to secure grain of any kind. Heretofore they have always been anxious and ready to sell but at the present time it is almost impossible for the local dealers to supply the demand of the people in Baker City who have stock to keep.

The cause of this combine among the farmers of this section of the country is the building of the Eagle Valley railroad, which will employ a large number of teams in the spring and the farmers are holding their grain in anticipation of the great demand and the high prices when active operations begin. The building of the Snake River Railroad will also create a strong market for grain and many of the ranchers expect to sell to the contractors on the Snake. With the two railroads building they are almost sure to obtain a high price for their grain and to make money by holding it.

### Fruit Replaces Forests.

Grants Pass—If the progress of clearing up raw land and improving it keeps on at the present pace, Josephine county, within five years, will be entirely cleared and planted to fruit. As an instance of this work it may be stated that one country store in Applegate valley has placed seven grubbing machines within the last month. These mechanical devices do the work of several men, with greater ease and less expense. Within short distances of town where heavy machinery may be used, donkey engines play a prominent part in pulling stumps and brush.

### Clackamas May Get Cannery.

Oregon City—If the present plans of the members of the Clackamas County Horticultural society are carried out, Clackamas county will have still another enterprise in the shape of a fruit cannery. A meeting of the society was held last week. Mr. Britton, of Eastern Oregon, addressed the meeting on the subject and stated that he had made a careful examination of the fruit acreage of this vicinity and finding it highly satisfactory, was willing to finance the scheme.

### Pumping Out Red Boy.

Baker City—After lying idle for months, the pumps of the famous Red Boy mine have been started again and the mine will soon be in condition for operation. The monster pumps throw out about 600,000 gallons of water every 24 hours, and at this rate the mine will be ready for operations in about 30 days. The Red Boy mine was one of the best producers of Eastern Oregon for many years and it is thought that it will again occupy a front rank.

### Will Issue Pamphlets.

Salem—The secretary of state has turned over to the state printer all measures to be submitted at the election June 3, and arguments for and against them, for the purpose of having them bound in one pamphlet, which will be sent to all voters throughout the state. This pamphlet will probably be ready for mailing at the end of March, when it will be sent to all voters whose names are sent in by the county clerks.

### Oregon Butter Sent East.

Corvallis—A carload of butter has been shipped by the Corvallis creamery to Philadelphia. The shipment comprised 50,000 pounds and is valued at above \$150,000. It is storage butter, and the movement is occasioned by much better prices for the product in the East than are obtained on the Coast.

### FILING PETITIONS.

**Candidates for Office Have More Than a Month**

Salem—Candidates for office have more than a month yet in which to procure signatures to their petitions and to file them in the office of the secretary of state or the county clerk as the case may be. Some of them are not familiar with the details of the direct primary law and are making inquiries as to dates. The last day for filing petitions for nominations for offices to be voted for in the state at large, or in any district composed of more than one county, or in judicial or prosecuting attorney districts, is March 27. This class of offices includes state offices, congressional offices, joint senators, joint representatives, circuit judges and district attorneys. These petitions are to be filed in the office of the secretary of state.

Petitions for nominations for offices to be voted for in only one county must be filed in the office of the county clerk not later than April 1.

The secretary of state will certify the state, congressional and district portion of the ballot to the county clerk by March 30. The primary election will be held Friday, April 17. The general election will be held Monday, June 1.

### Alfalfa for Cattle.

Pendleton—It is estimated that the increase in the alfalfa acreage of Umatilla county this spring will amount to at least 10 per cent. In the Butter creek and Hermiston districts in the West end of the county and also in the Hudson Bay district in the North part of the county active work in enlarging the alfalfa farms is now in progress. The raw land without water is worth but \$10 to \$25 per acre, while seeded to alfalfa and under irrigation it is worth from \$100 to \$150 per acre. The proposed erection of the packing plant at Portland has stimulated the growing of alfalfa and the feeding of cattle in this district very much.

### New Fruit Packing House.

Milton—At a meeting of the Milton Fruitgrowers' union the following directors were elected for the ensuing year: J. N. Stone, T. L. Ragsdale, William Forsythe, O. K. Goodman and E. P. Jensen. The union is in good condition and its affairs have been handled in a very creditable manner. It is the purpose of the union to build a new and larger packing house on the site of the present one for this season. The new building will probably be a three-story structure and will be conveniently arranged for the handling of fruit.

### After Federal Court

Pendleton—The Pendleton Commercial association will send a delegation to Washington to fight for the Federal district headquarters when the date of the hearing with the house judicial committee is fixed. If the Oregon delegation think it necessary, expressions from attorneys of Morrow, Gilliam, Sherman and other Eastern Oregon counties in favor of Pendleton for the headquarters will be secured.

### PORTLAND MARKETS.

Wheat—Club, 81c; bluestem, 83c; valley, 81c; red, 79c.  
Barley—Feed, \$26 per ton; brewing, \$32; rolled, \$29@30.  
Oats—No. 1 white, \$27; gray, \$27, per ton.  
Corn—Whole, \$32.50; cracked, \$33.50.  
Hay—Valley timothy, No. 1, \$17@18 per ton; Eastern Oregon timothy, \$20@21; clover, \$14@15; cheat, \$15; grain hay, \$14@15; alfalfa, \$12@13; vetch, \$14.

Fruits—Apples, table, \$1.75@3.00; cooking, \$1.25@1.50 per box; cranberries, \$8@11 per barrel.

Vegetables—Turnips, 75c per sack; carrots, 65c per sack; beets, \$1 per sack; cabbage, 1@1½¢ per pound; cauliflower, \$1.75@1.85; celery, \$3.75@4 per crate; onions, 15¢@20¢ per dozen; parsley, 20¢ per dozen; peppers, 17¢ per pound; pumpkins, 1¢@1½¢ per pound; radishes, 20¢ per dozen; spinach, 6¢ per pound; sprouts, 8¢ per pound; squash, 1¢@1½¢ per pound.  
Onions—\$2.50 per hundred.

Potatoes—\$2.50 p r hundred, delivered Portland; sweet potatoes, \$3.50@3.75 per cwt.

Butter—Fancy creamery, 30@35¢ per pound.

Poultry—Average old hens, 13¢@13½¢ per pound; mixed chickens, 12½¢@13¢; spring chickens, 12¢@13¢; roosters, 10¢@11¢; dressed chickens, 14¢; turkeys, live, 14¢@15¢; dressed, choice, 15¢@17¢; geese, live, 9¢@10¢; ducks, 14¢@15¢; pigeons, 75¢@1¢; squabs, \$1.50@2.  
Eggs—Fresh ranch candled, 22¢@23¢ per dozen.

Veal—75¢@125 pounds, 7c; 150 to 200 pounds, 5¢@6½¢.

Pork—Block, 75¢ to 150 pounds, 6½¢@7c; packers, 5¢@6c.

Hops—1907, prime and choice 4½¢@6¢ per pound; olds 1¢@2¢ per pound.

Wool—Eastern Oregon average best 18¢@20¢ per pound according to shrinkage; valley 18¢@20¢ according to fineness; mohair choice 25¢@30¢ per pound.

### RAILROADS RETRENCH.

**Will Close Small Stations Because of 9-Hour Law.**

Washington, March 3.—American railways have made arrangements to comply with the provisions of the "nine hour law." The operation of the law will mean the employment by railroad companies of several thousand additional operators and the closing of a large number of small stations on the principal systems. Discontinuing of railway service at many points, it is thought, will induce at least temporary inconvenience to traveling and shipping public in order to reduce operating expenses, which now seems necessary. The operating officials of the railways believe this is the only way they possibly can meet the situation with which they are confronted.

During the hearing of applications for an extension of the nine-hour law by the Interstate Commerce commission some astonishing statements were made by the operating officials of important railways. A good many lines, owing to a reduction in the revenues and to their inability to command the cash necessary to meet their payrolls, have been forced during the past four months almost to the point of asking for receivers.

With four or five exceptions, no important railroads of the country have indicated an intention to reduce the wages of their employees.

### SURPRISE FOR EVANS.

**Title of Vice Admiral Likely to Be Awarded Here.**

Washington, Mar 3.—In a quiet way naval officers in Washington are endeavoring to arrange an agreeable surprise for Admiral Evans when the battleship fleet under his command sails through the Golden Gate, completing the Pacific cruise. It is proposed to greet the rear admiral with a commission as vice admiral of the American navy. Of course, the success of this undertaking depends upon congress, but the president has done his part in making a proper recommendation to that body for the re-establishment of that naval grade, and it is not doubted that congress can be induced to act upon the recommendation in season to insure the issue of Admiral Evans' commission, so that he may bear the title of vice admiral for the few months that intervene between his arrival at San Francisco and his retirement from active service.

The naval argument in support of the proposed re-establishment of the grade of vice admiral is strongly reinforced by a comparison made at the Navy department between the British home fleet engaged in the maneuvers of last fall and the splendid battleship fleet commanded by Rear Admiral Evans. The British fleet, composed of 26 battleships, 15 armored cruisers, nine protected cruisers and 57 torpedo craft, was commanded by one admiral, three vice admirals, seven rear admirals and one commodore.

### SILVER THAW IN CHICAGO.

**Temperature Rises in Nick of Time to Save Big Damage.**

Chicago, March 3.—Record breaking destruction of telegraph and telephone property was averted today by a narrow margin. Sleet that covered wires and poles 25 to 50 miles, north and west and south of Chicago, and 100 to 150 miles east, was melted during the day by a rise of temperature just in the nick of time. Ice coated lines, sagging heavily, had already begun to snap to pieces or topple to the ground long lines of glistering overweighted poles.

The worst damage was east of this city and west of Fort Wayne. Trunk system on the Lake Shore and Michigan Central railways suffered particularly. In one instance a stretch of nearly a mile of poles bearing dozens of important circuits to New York and other Eastern cities, went down in a tangled mass of wreckage. With the mercury ascending a trifle, the miles of sleet disappeared almost as if by magic. Tonight the telegraph officials had restored the facilities to a basis adequate for the usual traffic and hoped to be able to care for brokerage and other business tomorrow without delay.

### Forcing the Use of Phones.

Cleveland, O., March 3.—The nine-hour law for railroad telegraphers is hastening the use of the telephone in the operation of trains, according to A. S. Ingalls, of the Lake Shore road, in an interview. "I believe," said Mr. Ingalls, "that the new law regulating working hours will bring about in one year what it would have taken ten years to accomplish in the direction of new use of telephones on railroads. Since October, tests have proved so satisfactory that railroads in many parts of the country have stirred themselves."

### Pittsburg Fears Flood.

Pittsburg, March 3.—A warm rain has been falling here and at the head waters of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers all day. Both streams are rising, and small creeks are already beyond their banks. It is expected the danger line of 22 feet will be passed unless there is an early change in the temperature and weather.